

## LT2 ANTI-HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

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## Our Learning Today Leading Tomorrow Multi-Academy Trust Vision

### Vision

Our vision is to build a group of outstanding schools across phases, including specialist provision, to become (a mid-size) Trust that provides vibrant and inclusive learning environments in which every member of the learning community is passionate about learning. The Trust is led by a CEO who works closely with Headteachers who lead the two schools supported by a central team to support finance, HR, estates and governance.

### Mission

LT2 Trust and schools will have a relentless focus on high achievement, supported by robust organisational structures and governance. We aim to give children and young people in our care the knowledge, skills and experiences to expand their minds and world view to enable them to develop a naturally inquisitive approach to learning and life, fit for an ever-changing world.

Ultimately, we will educate and support all children attending LT2 schools to grow into capable and contributing citizens who have developed the personal attributes and characteristics that will enable them to become considerate, self-reliant and confident young people who are ready for the next stage of their lives.

### Values

The Trust Values underpin the mission and provide the basis on which LT2 schools can articulate the key behavioural characteristics that promote a positive philosophy. Our six values are unseen drivers of our behaviour as experienced by others and are designed to create a shared organisational culture:

**Kindness** – The quality of friendliness, generosity, and consideration

**Collaboration** – The belief that working and learning with others will lead to greater success

**Curiosity** – A strong desire to know and to learn

**Resilience** – The ability to recover quickly and learn from the difficulties we face

**Respect** – To appreciate the importance of understanding and admiration for others and self

**Endeavour** – The belief that hard work is needed to achieve something of which we can be proud

### Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' is used in this document it refers to The Learning Today Leading Tomorrow Trust.
- Where the words 'Trust Board' are used it refers to the board of Trustees who set the vision for the Trust and hold the executive leadership team to account for delivering the Trust's strategic plan.

## 1. Organisation and Responsibilities

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all of the Trust's staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect, free from harassment or other forms of bullying.

This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs both in and out of the workplace, such as on School trips or at events or work-related social functions. It covers bullying and harassment by staff and also third parties such as students, parents, suppliers, governors or visitors to the School.

Staff must treat colleagues and others with dignity and respect, and should always consider whether their words or conduct could be offensive. Even unintentional harassment or bullying is unacceptable.

The Trust takes allegations of harassment or bullying seriously and will address them promptly and confidentially where possible. Harassment or bullying by a member of staff will be treated as misconduct under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. In some cases, it may amount to gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

The policy applies to every individual working for the School or Trust irrespective of their status, level or grade. It therefore includes the Headteacher, Heads of Department, members of the Senior Leadership Group, Directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, volunteers, home-workers, part-time or fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff (collectively referred to as "Staff" in this policy).

This policy does not form part of individuals' terms and conditions of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. It does however reflect the Trust's current practices and all Staff are required to familiarise themselves with it and to comply with its contents. The Trust reserves the right to amend this Policy at any time or to depart from it where it is considered appropriate.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, and its Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Breach of this policy will be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and, in serious cases, may amount to gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

### 1.2 Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits harassment related to gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 also makes it unlawful to pursue a course of conduct which the member of Staff knows or ought to know would be harassment, which includes causing someone alarm or distress.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the School has a duty to provide its Staff with a safe place and system of work.

Individuals can be personally liable to pay compensation and prosecuted under criminal as well as civil law. Individuals can be ordered to pay unlimited compensation where discrimination-based harassment has occurred, including the payment of compensation for injury to feelings.

This policy confirms the Trust's commitment to identifying and eliminating harassment, intimidation and bullying within the work environment.

### 1.3 Guidance under this Policy

The Head of HR is responsible for providing advice and guidance under this policy and reviewing and updating the policy as required.

### 1.4 Board of Trustees

**The Board of Trustees, as a corporate body, has the responsibility to set the strategic direction and objectives of all matters across the Trust.**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are maintained

The Chair of the Trust is responsible for managing the CEO, Trustees and Governors under this policy.

### 1.5 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO of Learning Today leading Tomorrow Trust (LT2):

- Takes overall responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures
- Must provide reports as appropriate to Trustees in relation to this policy
- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated and authorised within the organisations budget to meet statutory procedures and standards across the Trust
- Is responsible for managing the Headteachers and centrally appointed staff under this policy

### 1.6 Headteachers

Headteachers of LT2 schools are responsible for:

- The implementation of and compliance with this policy within their school ensuring competence in those staff who are responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy and associated guidance
- Identifying training needs
- Communicating this policy to all relevant people within the school
- Managing school-based teaching and associate staff under this policy

### 1.7 Senior and Middle Leaders (and other Supervisory Roles)

Although the Headteacher is responsible overall for the implementation of this policy in their school, managers have some specific responsibilities:

- Applying this policy within their own department and area of work

- Resolving any issues members of staff refer to them, informing the Headteacher of any issues to which they cannot achieve a satisfactory solution with the resources available to them
- Where required, conduct formal meetings, undertake relevant training in relation to this policy and ensure effective and competent operation of this policy

### 1.8 Other Employee Duties

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Comply with this policy and to co-operate with the schools' leadership and management on all matters relating to it
- Undertake any training recommended by their line manager

### 1.9 Related Policies and Procedures

- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedure

### 1.10 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

These procedures have been agreed by the Board of Trustees, who will approve them whenever reviewed.

## 2. Bullying and Harassment

### 2.1 Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined and threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.

Bullying may include, but is not limited to;

- Shouting at, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others
- Physical or psychological threats
- Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision
- Inappropriate and/or derogatory remarks about someone's performance
- Abuse of authority or power by those in positions of seniority
- Deliberately excluding someone from meetings or communications without good reason
- Personal intrusion through pestering, spying and stalking either in person or online
- Persistent unwarranted criticism

- Detrimental texts sent via mobiles or images of work colleagues posted on external websites following work events

Bullying does not include legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of a worker's performance or behaviour or reasonable instructions given to workers in the course of their employment.

## 2.2 Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to the victim's gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

Harassment includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

Harassment may include:

- Unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing, grabbing, brushing past someone, invading their personal space, and more serious forms of physical or sexual assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless), and suggestions that sexual favours may further a career or that a refusal may hinder it
- Continued suggestions for social activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome;
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic or that some people may find offensive (including e-mails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile telephone or posted on the internet)
- Offensive or intimidating comments or gestures, or insensitive jokes or pranks
- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, or derogatory or stereotypical remarks about a particular ethnic or religious group or gender
- Failure to safeguard confidential information
- Pressure to participate in political or religious groups
- Ignoring or shunning someone, for example, by deliberately excluding them from a conversation or a workplace activity

A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if they create an offensive environment for them.

Any member of Staff who genuinely believes that they are being subjected to harassment or that they are being bullied should not hesitate to use the procedures set out below.

### 3. Informal procedure:

If you are being bullied or harassed, you should initially consider raising the problem informally with the person responsible, if you feel able. You should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing to do on your own, you should speak to your Line Manager/Head of Department who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

If you are in any doubt as to whether an incident or series of incidents amount to bullying or harassment within the scope of this policy, then in the first instance you should approach either your Line Manager/Head of Department or a member of the Senior Leadership Group confidentially, on an informal basis, for advice.

If informal steps have not been successful or are not possible or appropriate, you should follow the formal procedure set out below.

### 4. Formal procedure:

If you wish to make a formal complaint about bullying or harassment, you should submit it in writing to your Line Manager/Head of Department, whose role is to achieve a solution wherever possible and to respect the confidentiality of all concerned. If the matter concerns that person, you should refer it to the Headteacher, Head of HR or Board of Governors/School Improvement Board.

Where the complaint relates to the Headteacher or a member of the Trust executive team, the grievance should be submitted to the CEO of the LT2 Trust. In such instances, the employee's right of appeal will be to the Chair of the Trust Board. Where the complaint relates to the CEO of LT2, the complaint should be submitted to the Trust Board Chair. In this instances, the employee's right of appeal should be to a different trustee.

Your written complaint should set out full details of the conduct in question. These details should include:

- The name of the harasser or bully
- The nature of the harassment or bullying
- The date(s) and time(s) when the harassment or bullying occurred
- The names of any witnesses
- Any action taken so far to attempt to stop the harassment or bullying

As a general principle, the decision whether to progress a complaint rests with you. However, the Trust has a duty to protect all of its Staff and may be obliged to pursue a complaint independently if, in all the circumstances, it is considered appropriate to do so.

Consideration will be given to whether the alleged harasser or bully should be redeployed temporarily, or suspended on full pay or whether reporting lines or other managerial arrangements need reasonably to be adjusted pending investigation into your written grounds of complaint and the outcome of the grievance hearing.

Further information is set out in the Trust's Grievance Policy and Procedure.



## 5. Protection from victimisation

The Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any member of Staff who makes a complaint or who participates in any investigation conducted under this policy in good faith will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation as a result of their involvement.

Victimisation is treating someone less favourably than others because they have in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or another member of Staff, or has supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Provided that a member of Staff acts in good faith, i.e. that they genuinely believe that what they are saying is true, they have the right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the Trust will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised that member of Staff.

Any member of Staff who considers that they have been subjected to any such intimidation or victimisation should seek support from their Line Manager/Head of Department or a member of the Senior Leadership Group. They may alternatively or additionally raise a complaint in writing under the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure. Where the complaint relates to the Head teacher or a member of the Trust executive team, the grievance should be submitted to the CEO of the LT2 Trust. In such instances, the employee's right of appeal will be to the Chair of the Trust Board. Where the complaint relates to the CEO of LT2, the complaint should be submitted to the Trust Board Chair. In these instances, the employee's right of appeal should be to a different trustee.

Any member of Staff who is, after investigation, found to have provided false information or to have acted in bad faith will be subject to disciplinary action under the School's disciplinary procedure.

## 6. What happens if I am accused of bullying and harassment?

If someone approaches you informally about your behaviour, do not dismiss the complaint out of hand because you consider that you were only joking or because you think the complainant is being too sensitive.

Staff should remember that different people find different things acceptable and perceptions can differ significantly from individual to individual. It is possible that you may have offended someone without intending to do so. If this is the case, the person concerned may be content with an explanation and an apology from you and an assurance that you will be careful in the future not to behave in a way that you know might cause offence. Provided that you do not repeat the behaviour which causes offence, this may well be the end of the matter.

Where a colleague has attempted to address the matter with you informally, appropriately and in good faith, any failure on your part to respond in kind or to take proactive steps to prevent future occurrences will be taken into account should disciplinary proceedings subsequently be instigated against you.

All members of Staff are reminded that taking the time to listen and communicate constructively with colleagues at an early stage may prevent matters from escalating to the level where formal grievance and disciplinary procedures may

need to be instigated. It is therefore in both party's clear interests to seek to resolve the matter amicably, cooperatively and constructively.

If a formal complaint is made about you, this will be fully investigated and the Trust may bring disciplinary proceedings if appropriate. Complaints of bullying and harassment will often be allegations of misconduct or gross misconduct which if proven could lead to dismissal or summary dismissal (termination of your employment with the Trust without notice). You may be suspended on full pay during the investigation and (if a disciplinary hearing is to be called) until disciplinary proceedings have been concluded.

Members of Staff should refer to the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for further information.

The Trust will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and will endeavour to maintain confidentiality as far as reasonably practicable whilst discharging its duties under this policy.

As above, allegations which prove to be made in bad faith or maliciously will be treated as potential disciplinary offences in themselves under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

## **7. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an important part of the procedures provided under this policy. Every member of Staff involved in the operation of the policy, whether making a complaint or involved in any investigation, is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required.

A Breach of confidentiality will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence and may give rise to disciplinary action under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.